

**European Coalition of Cities Against Racism  
(ECCAR)  
City of Bruges Plan  
2021 – 2025**

**An urban plan outlined in 10 concrete commitments:**

1. Greater vigilance against racism  
Diversiteit Brugge (Diversity in Bruges) / Unia
2. Assessment of racism and discrimination and monitoring of municipal policy  
Diversiteit Brugge / Strategic Unit (Strategische Cel)
3. Better support for the victims of racism and discrimination  
Unia
4. Greater participation and better informed city dwellers  
Strategic Unit
5. The city as an active supporter of equal opportunities practices  
Work and Enterprise
6. The city as an equal opportunities employer and service provider  
The City of Bruges' staff and organisation / OCMW (social services)
7. Fair access to housing  
Accommodation Service (Woondienst) / Local Social Policy Unit (Cel Lokaal Sociaal Beleid)
8. Combating racism and discrimination through education  
Accompanying Education Policy
9. Promoting cultural diversity  
Cultural Centre (Cultuurcentrum)
10. Hate crimes and conflict management  
Local Police Force

## An urban plan of action:

### 1. Why does the City of Bruges want to become the ECCAR City of Bruges?

Diversity not only adds colour to society, it also brings tensions with it. By drawing up a cross-sectional ECCAR plan, it is the City of Bruges' wish to be a warm and supportive city that takes the lead in the fight against racism and discrimination. This is reflected in the 2019-2024 administrative agreement. Diversiteit Brugge supports this with action plan SAP0130: **the City of Bruges pursues an anti-discrimination and anti-racism policy**. Concrete actions below are SA00094: **the City of Bruges joins ECCAR and implements a 10-point plan to combat racism and discrimination** and SA00095: **the City of Bruges continues its structural cooperation with UNIA (Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities), which anyone in Belgium can turn to who has been the target of discrimination and helps the city take preventive action, organise training, as well as issue guidance and policy advice**.

With Diversiteit Brugge in charge of the ECCAR plan, existing policy can be consolidated and strengthened. In addition, the plan also offers opportunities for our city to identify needs that can be addressed in the future. The bird's eye view on the theme of racism and discrimination is an added value, as is the exchange with services of Groep Brugge that tie in with these themes within their mission and policy. In order to achieve maximum local support, Bruges' civil society will also be involved, as may interested citizens. After all, racism and discrimination is everyone's business! Moreover, the exchange with other ECCAR cities offers opportunities to learn what works (and what doesn't), and good practices can be appropriately translated within their own urban context.

ECCAR primarily addresses racism. In Bruges, we extend this to racism as well as discrimination, but keep the focus on ethnic-cultural diversity. As a first step towards the development of an ECCAR plan for the City of Bruges, an exploratory study was conducted by Diversiteit Brugge, entitled 'The role of racism and discrimination in Bruges' origin divide in education and employment'<sup>1</sup>. In addition to local statistics, the local Bruges context (end 2019) was mapped out for the two above-mentioned themes through interviews with various benchmark players. It is this research that forms the basis for this ECCAR plan.

In addition to its ambition of becoming an 'ECCAR city', the City of Bruges has – since 2018 – been a member of the **Flemish network against racism and discrimination** (Vlaams netwerk ter bestrijding van racisme en discriminatie), which unites some 10 cities. This city network 'closer to home' came about in the shadow of ECCAR and is meant to help cities addressing these themes exchange good practices at the Flemish level. After all, cities/regional capitals often face similar challenges. Being able to learn from others and test one's own proposals is a shot in the arm for cities wishing to further expand their local anti-discrimination policies.

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<sup>1</sup> Dutch title: De rol van racisme en discriminatie in de Brugse herkomstkloof in onderwijs, tewerkstelling en onderwijs

With the ECCAR plan, we help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDGs 10, 16 and 17:



## 2. A clear plan with different strands

The City of Bruges wants to develop a dynamic ECCAR plan that is flexible but at the same time unambiguous and manageable. A plan that actively encourages many different partners to think and act. Through an efficient structure and appropriate distribution of tasks, we strive for added value but limit the extra workload for partners who take on a role in this. This can only be achieved by staying close to the task in hand and each participant's policy approach and by committing 100% to participation. In order to ensure broad involvement, Bruges' ECCAR plan needs to be supported both internally (within the city organisation) and externally.

The ECCAR action plan contains 10 concrete commitments. In the Bruges plan, these chapters are elaborated on the basis of 4 strands. This ensures that we reflect on the purpose of the various actions we put forward. Some of the 10 points can run on one strand, others are translated into several strands.

The four strands we wish to address are:

- **Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.
- **Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and respect for ethnic and cultural diversity
- **Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations through negotiation, mediation or sanctions if they are not complied with
- **Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring

### 3. A link with policy and legislature

As we tie the ECCAR plan in with the City of Bruges' policy programme, the commitments are integrated within the multi-annual planning. We take the multi-annual plans of the various city services as a starting point and supplement them with needs and feedback that have been mapped out at service level. This becomes the benchmark from which we depart to flesh out the plan. Based on internal and external output, policy recommendations can eventually be included in the drafting of the next multi-annual plans.

ECCAR is a continuous process in which we adjust the plan every first year of the new legislature and fine-tune the commitments to the new policy period. In this way, the plan can continue to grow in line with the city's needs.

In practice, we split up the 10 commitments as follows:

- **Entire chapters within the framework of the general policy of the Groep Brugge.**

For the entire legislature (2021 - 2025), this is policy-based and ad-hoc:

- 1: vigilance (overarching at plan level)
- 2: municipal policy (city-wide - Strategische Cel)
- 3: support to victims (policy - project - awareness-raising)
- 6: equal opportunities employer (policy - project - awareness-raising)
- 10: hate crimes and conflicts (policy - project - awareness-raising)

- **Theme-based chapters, more comprehensive than urban policy, which offer the opportunity to take action with both internal and external partners.**

By addressing a specific commitment in a specific year of the current legislature, we can elaborate on its content. The link between commitment and year was chosen partly on the basis of Diversiteit Brugge's multi-annual plan.

- 2021: housing (7)
- 2022: education (8)
- 2023: informed city dwellers (4)
- 2024: employment (5)
- 2025: culture (9)

With this division and tying it in with the multi-annual planning, we hope to facilitate the phased implementation of the ECCAR plan. The feedback collected over the course of the broad(er) partnership can be used as input for the next multi-annual plans. With this *modus operandi*, Bruges opts for a pro-active, socially supported plan with a long-term vision.

#### 4. Different roles within an efficient structure

We provide an efficient framework to make the Bruges ECCAR plan a strong and meaningful instrument that offers added value for all partners and entails a minimum of extra work. We identify the following roles in this respect:

**a. Those managing on their own**

The ECCAR plan, directed by Diversiteit Brugge, involves:

- an annual membership fee
- contact with ECCAR and the Flemish Network
- taking care of promotional and press communication
- unsubscribing and adjusting the plan, based on shared input from all partners
- maintaining an overview thanks to feedback moments with steering group.

**b. The core group (four-monthly)**

The core group, consisting of Diversiteit Brugge, the Agency for Integration (Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering) and UNIA, takes on the following tasks:

- monitoring and connecting the plan's outlines
- mid-term evaluation and finger on the pulse
- preparing the organisation of annual reviews and follow-up steering group.

**c. The key players**

The role of the key players – from a place of ownership – is to nourish the specific commitment with the policy adopted by their own services. In addition, they help decide which partners can be involved in order to arrive at concrete input/actions (depending on the specific chapter). This involves the following tasks:

- organising consultations with stakeholders
- feedback within the steering committee
- monitoring campaigns.

Key players determine the way in which the consultation with stakeholders is organised. This can be done, for example, by setting up focus groups (ad hoc). Such groups can consist of stakeholders who have both internal and external links to the theme of the commitment. This can range from the broad civil society, advisory councils, the Bruggelink Platform, right through to interested citizens. Focus groups can help feed the policy that is being pursued and shape specific campaigns.

**d. The steering group (two-yearly)**

The steering group, comprising members of the core group and key players, meets twice a year:

- Preparations for the coming working year are made in the spring. We explore the annual theme and prepare for it together.

In the autumn, the past working year is evaluated with a general meeting for all stakeholders.

Together, we prepare the content of the annual evaluation and organise this event for all stakeholders involved in the ECCAR plan.

**5. Communication that is both tolerant and goes a long way**

The City of Bruges is eager to beef up the ECCAR plan and establish clear, accessible and far-reaching communication. Bruges wants to be a warm city of and for everyone, but expressing this ambition is far from sufficient. As a member of ECCAR, we resolutely reject any form of racism and discrimination. This ambition translates into a broad plan with more than 100 concrete actions. Over the next four years, we will roll out this city-wide plan and in doing so, create equal opportunities for every citizen of Bruges, regardless of their origin or skin colour.

Of course, as a city, we cannot implement this plan successfully on our own. The city council and its partners will have to join forces with civil society organisations and citizens. A diverse city of and for everyone is rooted in constructive cooperation between local government, a strong civil society and well-informed citizens. Our plan therefore gives all the people of Bruges maximum opportunity to think along with us and take a stand against racism and discrimination. By fighting this battle together, we look beyond what divides us and strengthen what unites us: after all, we are all citizens of this beautiful city. Anyone who wants to make a positive contribution to this initiative is most welcome. This is how we want to make Bruges a city for everyone!

With the slogan: ' Allemaal 8000' (All 8000) and the baseline: ' Stad van Iedereen' (City of Everyone), we want to spread the message of this plan far and wide and make it tangible. With the logo below as a *leitmotiv*, we want to support all communication on this theme, make it accessible and focus 100% on recognisability.

**ALLEMAAL  
STAD 8000  
VAN IEDEREEN**

**COMMITMENT NO.1**

**GREATER VIGILANCE AGAINST RACISM**

Setting up a monitoring, vigilance and solidarity network against racism at urban level.

Key player: Diversiteit Brugge / Unia

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 1.1.1. We bring the themes of racism and discrimination to the attention through the City of Bruges' news and information channels and inform about ECCAR and the actions organised in this context.
- 1.1.2. We introduce partner organisation Unia using the City of Bruges's website and help increase the willingness to report through communication campaigns.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 1.2.1. In its communications, the City of Bruges commits to representing each and every citizen of Bruges, with sufficient attention to diversity.
- 1.2.2. We put ECCAR and the themes racism and discrimination on the agenda of the Bruges advisory councils and intend to keep them there.
- 1.2.3. We organise an annual training programme for professionals on the themes of racism and discrimination.
- 1.2.4. We support low-threshold citizens' initiatives that put racism and discrimination in a positive light.
- 1.2.5. The City of Bruges and Unia are committed to recognising, preventing and reporting racism and discrimination through a targeted training programme in services, organisations and companies. This programme is linked to the thematic policy priorities formulated in this ECCAR plan. Aspects that spring to mind in the context of this training programme include:
  - the publication and promotion of Unia's eDIV tool
  - dealing with racism and discrimination in the workplace
  - reporting cases of racism and discrimination (in a simple manner).
- 1.2.6. City of Bruges supports and promotes Club Brugge's campaign 'show racism the red card'. With this initiative, Club Brugge wants to raise awareness about diversity and social cohesion and to combat physical and verbal violence linked to racism. With this initiative, Club Brugge organises campaigns for schools, youth clubs and supporters.
- 1.2.7. The City of Bruges commits to 'free time for all' in which we pay attention to a culture-sensitive offering within leisure activities and support leisure providers.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 1.3.1. Together with the city's Communication & City Marketing department, we fight hate speech in the city's social media channels. We also make use of the city's social media channels to make positive messages heard. Role models from Bruges can get a voice in this.

**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 1.4.1. Unia supports the City of Bruges' priority policy on anti-discrimination and racism.
- 1.4.2. We make a matrix of the points in the ECCAR plan and so commit to a guaranteed and thorough follow-up of the different actions taken.



**COMMITMENT NO.2**

**ASSESSMENT OF RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION AND MONITORING OF MUNICIPAL POLICY**

Initiating or further developing the collection of data on racism and discrimination, setting achievable targets and establishing common guidelines for assessing the impact of municipal policies.

Key player: Strategische Cel Stad Brugge

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 2.1.1. We ensure a better disclosure of Unia's services within the services of Groep Brugge (city, OCMW and local police).

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 2.2.1. We make city services responsive to including the issues of racism and discrimination within their own policy areas. Monitoring is done by the City of Bruges' Strategische Cel.
- 2.2.2. We take part in learning networks where expertise is shared.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 2.3.1. We introduce a non-discrimination clause in all urban subsidy regulations.

**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 2.4.1. We screen urban policies on racism and non-discrimination within the framework of the SDGs.
- 2.4.2. Unia keeps records of its reports and actions and processes these into an annual report. This report is presented to the Mayor and Aldermen and to the municipal staff. Via the City of Bruges' website, the information is shared with all citizens.
- 2.4.3. We encourage local antennas to pick up and share signals, evolutions and trends. Examples are BUAR (Bruges United Against Racism), The BruggeLink Platform, the Conductors in Diversity, the Education Ambassadors, NT2 (Dutch as a second language) schools, initiatives within Dutch-language-practice opportunities, reception initiatives, frontline services and interest groups.
- 2.4.4. On the basis of Unia's and the Ombudsman's annual report, which contains the registered incidents and trends, we further encourage the policy sectors involved. The survey

'samenleven in diversiteit' (living together in diversity) is yet another source of information in this respect.

- 2.4.5. We draw attention to Unia's policy recommendations and current themes that have a local impact.

**COMMITMENT NO.3**

**BETTER SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIMS OF RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION**

Supporting victims and helping them increase their capacity to defend themselves against racism and discrimination.

Key player: Unia / Diversiteit Brugge

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 3.1.1. The City of Bruges informs its residents that Unia is the organisation to which victims or witnesses of racism and discrimination can turn. The city includes this in its communication and mentions it in an accessible way on the city website, the city Magazine and other (internal and external) communication channels.
- 3.1.2. Unia informs frontline services in an accessible manner about its operation and activities. As frontline workers, the Administrative Centre (Huis van de Bruggeling), the receptionists at OCMW and CAW (General Welfare Work Centre) North West Flanders, as well as the Conductors in Diversity come into contact with accounts of discrimination and are, therefore, important partners in this project.
- 3.1.3. Unia works together with the city's Ombudsman to ensure that all reports of racism and discrimination are followed up.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 3.2.1. In cooperation with various partners, Unia is investigating a specific pathway for victims of racism and discrimination, which provides them with tools for helping them respond and deal with the emotions involved.
- 3.2.2. Unia is investigating the possibility of organising the 'bystander intervention' pathway. This programme deals with all forms of discrimination and provides tools for dealing with them. The aim is to empower witnesses of discrimination so that victims feel more supported. We explore an offering for our citizens and in a professional context (e.g. city guards, training on the work floor...).

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 3.3.1. Unia is keeping its finger on the pulse in relation to the COL 13 circular, thanks to which local police forces will be appointing a so-called 'reference officer' for tracking and prosecuting discrimination and hate crimes. If appropriate, Unia will take it upon itself to negotiate in case

of reports of discrimination. In this context, Unia organises an annual meeting and training day for the police services.

**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 3.4.1. Interesting initiatives contributing to better support for victims are announced on the website [www.kiesgelijkekansen.be](http://www.kiesgelijkekansen.be).

**COMMITMENT NO.4**

**GREATER PARTICIPATION AND BETTER INFORMED CITY DWELLERS (2023)**

To better inform city dwellers about their rights and obligations, about protection and legal possibilities, and about penalties for racist acts or behaviour, through a participatory approach, in particular through consultation with users of the service and service providers.

Key player: Strategische Cel – participation mentor

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 4.1.1. With the support of the Conductors in Diversity, we continue to work, together with the Administrative Centre (Huis van de Bruggeling), on an accessible, culture-sensitive service for every citizen of Bruges.
- 4.1.2. Together with Unia and the Ombudsman, we are developing a city brochure where the themes of racism and discrimination are clearly explained and where all citizens can find their way in case they wanted to lodge a (simple) complaint to Unia or the Ombudsman.
- 4.1.3. Via the City of Bruges' website, we mention our ECCAR membership and make our 10-point plan widely known. In addition, concrete follow-up actions in the context of ECCAR are communicated and Unia's complaint form can be found there. We are also thinking about launching a concrete checklist for citizens that will answer the question: 'what can you personally do to fend off displays of racism and discrimination?'.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 4.2.1. We are committed to creating a wide range of participation opportunities in order to reach and involve as many citizens as possible in ECCAR's collective initiative.
- 4.2.2. With the awareness-raising set of activities 'Allemaal Mensen Brugge', we organise and support activities that connect and deploy people from Bruges on the topics of migration, integration and diversity. We explicitly involve people from Bruges with a migration background in order to help shape this programme.
- 4.2.3. On 21 March, we also plan an annual campaign in which the specific ECCAR theme will come to the fore.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 4.3.1. The City of Bruges is investigating the different ways of responding when it receives reports from citizens regarding racist and discriminatory behaviour.

**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 4.4.1. Inherent to the organisation of ECCAR in our city, we organise an annual forum in which involved partner organisations and interested citizens are invited to take stock of the past year. Partners and citizens present at this forum are strongly encouraged to participate in the city's joint anti-racism and anti-discrimination policy.
- 4.4.2. We involve interest groups in the ECCAR project and explore how we can get their voices heard in the most effective way.

**COMMITMENT NO.5**

**THE CITY AS AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES PRACTICES (2024)**

Facilitating equal opportunities in employment and supporting diversity in the labour market by exercising the city council's existing discretionary powers.

Key player: Werk en Ondernemen

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 5.1.1. We inform and support Bruges companies in their quest to develop a diversity policy that does justice to every (potential) member of staff:
  - How do I draw up a culture-sensitive diversity policy?
  - How do I conduct and stimulate an intercultural dialogue with and between all employees?
  - How do I make my company accessible – through job applications – to candidate employees who have the right skills?
  - ...
- 5.1.2. We inform companies in Bruges about the opportunities for training and employing socially vulnerable target groups.
- 5.1.3. We inform and communicate about the employment projects developed by the City of Bruges and its partners, which provide scope for disadvantaged groups on the labour market. We pay specific attention to projects that provide micro-credits to young starters and projects that stimulate entrepreneurship among vulnerable young people.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 5.2.1. We pay attention to the theme of racism and discrimination within the communication of PUB (Positief Uitgaan Brugge – Going Out in Bruges with Positivity) of the City of Bruges.
- 5.2.2. We are conducting a targeted campaign to make companies more culturally aware and in this context, the website [www.vreemdevragen.be](http://www.vreemdevragen.be) springs to mind. This website supports companies in setting up a diversity policy in the workplace. We specifically encourage small SMEs to commit to this.
- 5.2.3. We focus on recognising, preventing and reporting racism and discrimination through training in companies and businesses:
  - publicising and promoting Unia's eDIV tool
  - dealing with racism and discrimination in the workplace
  - lodging a (simple) complaint of racism and discrimination.
- 5.2.4. We explore the possibilities of buddy work within Bruges companies.

- 5.2.5. We give due consideration to diversity as a criterion when presenting Bruges Awards or other nominations.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 5.3.1. As we include a non-discrimination clause in the public contracts of the City of Bruges, we encourage companies to implement a diversity policy.

**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 5.4.1. Within the inter-municipal partnership *Werkkracht 10*, together with 9 other municipalities, we explore the scope of employment for disadvantaged groups with a view to reducing inequality on the labour market. We inform each other and join forces to develop a regional policy that offers employment opportunities to every citizen.



**COMMITMENT NO.6**

**THE CITY AS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER AND SERVICE PROVIDER**

The city pledges to be an equal opportunities employer and a fair service provider, and is committed to monitoring, training and development to achieve this goal.

Key player: City of Bruges staff and organisation / OCMW

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 6.1.1. We include a non-discrimination clause in the labour regulations, which is set to raise workers and citizens' awareness of racism and discrimination. A charter can be drawn up for each department in order to tailor it to the specific requirements of that department.
- 6.1.2. There is a discrimination hotline of the internal department for prevention and protection at work (IDPPW) as well as an external IDPPW department which employees can turn to with racism- and/or discrimination-related complaints.
- 6.1.3. The presence of confidential counsellors within the organisation is made known through various channels and in all welfare-related initiatives. Employees can contact these confidential counsellors and the occupational health and safety department with personal questions or problems concerning racism and discrimination.
- 6.1.4. The recruitment channels for vacancies are being expanded. In addition, the communication conducted in this context will be made more accessible.
- 6.1.5. We launch and initiate pilot projects in cooperation with relevant partners in order to bring target groups to our organisation. For example: the development of a specific language package to be able to function within a certain position as well as the organisation of information days for specifically recruited and interested participants from the target group.
- 6.1.6. We are developing a placement policy whereby the City of Bruges actively offers placements to training institutions and a wide range of placements are provided within the City of Bruges. We specifically explore the possibilities for target group placements.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 6.2.1. Through its code of ethics, the City of Bruges continues to work on an organisational culture in which every customer and every staff member is considered and treated as fully-fledged and equal. In doing so, the city continues to focus on a training policy in which 5 key priorities are actively deployed:

leadership and management, customer orientation, communication & cooperation, safety & wellbeing at work, quality and efficiency (including IT); pioneering spirit & innovation) and monitoring the efficient division of tasks and budgets.

Within this training policy, we will look at where the links with diversity can be made.

- 6.2.2. We strengthen the City of Bruges' employer image by focusing on 'Employer Branding'. This means among other things: marketing the City of Bruges as an equal-opportunities employer.
- 6.2.3. Mention is made of 'equal opportunities' in every vacancy, but we underline this by working with role models.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 6.3.1. Groep Brugge takes the lead and penalises in case of discriminatory or racist behaviour displayed by employees and specifically includes this in the employment regulations of the City of Bruges, OCMW Bruges and the local police.

**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 6.4.1. Data management for personnel data is being optimised. There is a diversity dashboard. A large number of variables can be requested and analyses can be drawn from it. This can be refined and expanded in the future.
- 6.4.2. The current recruitment policy is being scrutinised for accessibility for specific target groups. In this process, we always take the applicable regulations into account.

#### OCMW INITIATIVES:

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 6.1.1. There is a Discrimination hotline of the internal department for prevention and protection at work (IDPPW) as well as an external IDPPW department which employees can turn to with racism and/or discrimination-related complaints.
- 6.1.2. The presence of confidential counsellors within the organisation is made known through various channels and in all welfare-related initiatives. Employees can contact these confidential counsellors and the occupational health and safety department with personal questions or problems concerning racism and discrimination.
- 6.1.3. We pay due attention to individual pathways, mediation pathways or coaching pathways at team level if there is a need or demand for this. This is done via the confidential counsellor or HR Business Partner.
- 6.1.4. Via the intranet page, employees are optimally informed about the diversity policy in the organisation.

- 6.1.5. We share information about specific initiatives or campaigns in the various communication channels such as intranet, staff magazine, etc.
- 6.1.6. Through numerous projects, OCMW Bruges focuses on everyone's possibilities and offers support in exhausting everyone's fundamental social rights (e.g. (Language) Talent project, residential workshops, etc.).
- 6.1.7. Through various social employment statutes, attention is paid to attracting and employing various disadvantaged groups. In this respect, the focus is always on helping them progress to the normal economic circuit, both internally and externally.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 6.2.1. Through training courses and specific programmes on diversity, we want to offer tailor-made solutions and a framework for dealing with broad diversity within different target groups and activities.  
We strive for a rollout within our entire organisation and associations.
- 6.2.2. Following external training courses on diversity is encouraged.
- 6.2.3. Within the renewed leadership pathway, attention is paid to dealing with diversity at team level.
- 6.2.4. By organising, and taking part in, awareness-raising campaigns, we stimulate our organisation to become more diversity-conscious.
- 6.2.5. We participate in Howest's International semester 'Migration and Refugees'. This is done by providing information and offering placements to the international students on this programme.
- 6.2.6. Integration of diversity in HR processes
  - We strive for maximum accessibility of the selection procedures by removing thresholds and measuring competencies in an equivalent way. By doing this, we want to give everyone the opportunity to participate (e.g. provide more time to read/write, provide a deaf interpreter, software for computer tests, etc.).
  - The selection tests are geared to what we measure. If, for example, language is less important, we try to limit this aspect as much as possible by, for example, working more with practical tests or with photos or videos.
  - There is a strong focus on competency-based recruitment. If a person does not meet the diploma requirements, the applicant is given the opportunity to take part in a competency test.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 6.3.1. Groep Brugge takes the lead and penalises in case of discriminatory or racist behaviour displayed by employees and specifically includes this in the employment regulations of the City of Bruges, OCMW Bruges and the local police.

**COMMITMENT NO.7**

**FAIR ACCESS TO HOUSING (2021)**

Taking pro-active measures to reinforce anti-discrimination policies in the field of housing within the city.

Key player: Accommodation Service / Local Social Policy Unit

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 7.1.1. The City of Bruges is actively committed to informing citizens comprehensively. The accommodation counter (Woonloket) will be further developed into an information desk where contact with the emergency services can also be made. In addition, efforts are also being made to create neighbourhood-specific hotspots with a view to making information about housing as accessible as possible.
- 7.1.2. The City of Bruges is setting up a platform for alternative forms of housing. With this platform, the city will be developing a diverse range of housing, tailored to the needs of its residents.
- 7.1.3. Unia's local hotline will be put even more in the spotlight in order to accurately inform all those involved (citizens, organisations, services) about the ways racism and discrimination can be (easily) reported.
- 7.1.4. City of Bruges and OCMW join forces:
  - to support automatic screening and maximum exhaustion of rights for vulnerable tenants;
  - to set up a fund to combat eviction in order to be able to offer more guarantees on the private rental market;
  - to inform and relieve vulnerable (prospective) tenants through residential coaching, buddy work and specific information and prevention sessions (e.g. residential workshops).

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 7.2.1. The City of Bruges is consulting with the social housing organisations, the private rental market and the private landlords and is launching a process that includes the following priorities:
  - informing about anti-discrimination legislation
  - knowing, preventing, recognising and reporting racism and discrimination
  - publicising and promoting Unia's eDIV tool
  - dealing with racism and discrimination among owners and (potential) owners
  - drawing up and introducing a non-discrimination charter
  - campaigning to make the sector more culturally aware.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 7.3.1. The City of Bruges includes the obligation to display information in the police regulations and enforces this obligation.
- 7.3.2. We are looking into the possibility of establishing an intensive cooperation between Housing Policy (Woonbeleid) - (neighbourhood) police – Tenants Association (Huurdersbond) and Unia in which abuses on the rental market are mapped out and addressed.
- 7.3.3. The City of Bruges pursues a proactive housing quality policy, among other things by conducting conformity studies.

**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 7.4.1. The City of Bruges is fighting discrimination on the private rental market.
- 7.4.2. Along with the Municipal Housing Council (Stedelijke Woonraad), the housing policy plan and the joint action plan 'we give more people a decent roof over their heads', the City of Bruges wants to create maximum opportunities to make housing accessible to every Bruges resident.
- 7.4.3. The City of Bruges reports problems that cannot be tackled locally to higher authorities.

**COMMITMENT NO.8**

**COMBATING RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION THROUGH EDUCATION (2022)**

Strengthening measures against discrimination in accessing and enjoying all forms of education and promoting the provision of education in the context of mutual tolerance and understanding, as well as intercultural dialogue.

Key player: Flanking Educational Policy

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 8.1.1. The City of Bruges supports the Educational Ambassadors project (Onderwijsambassadeurs) within the Bruges schools and commits to promoting it. This project involves non-Dutch-speaking parents more closely in the topic of education in our city. A team of educational ambassadors act as intermediaries between the own (language) community and the parents and gives, in their native language, the necessary information about the educational topics. In this way, non-Dutch-speaking parents are better informed, which leads to less inequality in education.
- 8.1.2. We deploy bridging players in those schools where their efforts can make a difference.
- 8.1.3. The City of Bruges has bundled the existing diversity selection (initiatives, didactic material...) in a brochure and is making it available to schools in Bruges.
- 8.1.4. We are exploring the possibility of organising a SID-in fair in Bruges, too, so that vulnerable pupils are better informed about the career options and training after secondary education.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 8.2.1. We continue to work towards a positive Bruges school climate where good practices and expertise are shared to fight racism and discrimination together.
- 8.2.2. We promote an inclusive diversity policy in schools that proactively promotes equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their origin or background.
- 8.2.3. We are exploring the possibility of setting up a campaign with role models that consolidate diversity policies within schools.
- 8.2.4. We provide schools in Bruges with concrete tools to work on racism and discrimination, including stories and testimonies from hands-on experts to reach children, teachers, supply teachers and management.
- 8.2.5. Through a training programme, the Agency for Integration is working out a support selection around the theme of polarisation, tailored to the needs of the participating schools.

- 8.2.6. Based on our role within the SIREE project, we are stimulating the reform of teacher training within Vives in the area of cultural awareness.
- 8.2.7. In addition, we are looking into specific training to support teachers who are already working in schools in Bruges.

**Strand 3:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 8.3.1. The Agency for Integration uses a targeted training programme to take stock of the needs within, and feedback from, Bruges' schools.
- 8.3.2. The City of Bruges is also working closely together with the LOP (Local Consultation Platform). This way, feedback can be collected at a higher and cities can learn from each other.

**COMMITMENT NO.9**

**PROMOTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY (2025)**

Ensuring fair representation and promoting the city dwellers' diverse range of cultural expression and heritage in the city council's cultural programmes, collective memory and public space and promoting interculturality in urban life.

Key player: Cultural Centre

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS:**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 9.1.1. The Cultural Centre and the city's cultural players are committed to making the programme and the offerings for specific target groups more inclusive.
- 9.1.2. Volunteer work will be further rolled out in order to buttress the Cultural Centre's activities and increase support. To this end, the Cultural Centre is collaborating with Refu Interim and announcing its proposal to the Bruges Volunteer Centre (Brugse Vrijwilligerscentrale) and the Volunteer Market for non-Dutch speakers (Vrijwilligersmarkt Anderstaligen). It is also being investigated where it is possible to work with volunteers within the Cultural Centre's public operation.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 9.2.1. The City of Bruges pursues a policy of a culture-aware and inclusive offer for every one of its residents:
  - the Cultural Centre and the Public Library are looking for specific target groups that are more difficult to reach. The memo 'free time for all' forms the guiding principle in this respect.
  - the Cultural Centre's scope is broadened by booking artists from various backgrounds and we pay attention to ethnic-cultural diversity within the cultural programme.
- 9.2.2. Through projects, the City of Bruges aims for a culture-aware and accessible programme for every one of its citizens.
- 9.2.3. The City is investigating how the cultural subsidies can be made more inclusive and diverse.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 9.3.1. We examine the need for, and explore the possibility of, establishing a response framework in the event of incidents of racist and/or discriminatory statements and conduct on the part of both visitors and artists.



**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 9.4.1. We are setting up panels that screen the offerings of all urban culture providers and thus focus on accessibility.
- 9.4.2. The City of Bruges participates in learning networks that staunchly advocate diversity and accessibility of the cultural policy. Where possible, we implement structural changes in our own operations.

**COMMITMENT NO.10**

**HATE CRIMES AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

Supporting the introduction of mechanisms for dealing with hate crimes and conflict management.

Key player: Local police

**CITY OF BRUGES ACTIONS**

**Strand 1:** Inform and advise: inform and/or advise citizens, organisations, etc. on existing and relevant legislation, initiatives, etc.

- 10.1.1. Maximum use will be made of the social role of district police officers. This will be done by investing in training and support for mediating in situations involving racism and hate crimes which are not subject to criminal prosecution.
- 10.1.2. Maximum use is made of the federal online consultation platform to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise between police districts on, among other things, discrimination and hate crimes.
- 10.1.3. We will take it upon ourselves to make the circular Col 13/2013 containing instructions for a correct investigation and prosecution policy with regard to discrimination and hate crimes better known to the police and judicial services.
- 10.1.4. Unia is setting up a working group with police officers and magistrates at provincial level. Unia informs and makes them aware of their role. The objective here is to improve investigation and enforcement work through training, exchange and contacts with civil society.

**Strand 2:** Raise awareness: make people/organisations aware of equal treatment in all areas of life and with respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- 10.2.1. The Bruges Police Force invests in training sessions for its own staff, teaching them to adequately deal with racist crimes and conflicts.
- 10.2.2. Within the recruitment policy of the Bruges Police Force, concrete efforts are being made to reach new staff members from diverse backgrounds. This is done even more broadly by working with actual role models within the police force.
- 10.2.3. The Bruges Police Force focuses on disseminating existing awareness-raising (campaigns) on racism and discrimination.

**Strand 3:** Enforce: enforce regulations by negotiation, mediation or sanction if they are not complied with.

- 10.3.1. We are exploring the possibilities of implementing the themes 'racism and discrimination' in the training programme for inspectors within the West Flemish police school.
- 10.3.2. The Local Integral Security Cell (LIVC) of the City of Bruges is rounding up the city's social and police partners to discuss the theme of radicalisation. With this body, we can constantly monitor the threat or the actual follow-up of crimes related to racism.

**Strand 4:** Take stock and log: with the aim of formulating policy proposals to the various policy levels and to focus on monitoring.

- 10.4.1. The police figures in the Bruges region concerning racism, discrimination and xenophobia are updated and processed annually. This concerns all files in which an official report has been drawn up.
- 10.4.2. Unia also logs on an annual basis the number of files on hate speech and hate crimes in the Bruges region.
- 10.4.3. We are investigating what possibilities there are for an adequate exchange of information between the Bruges Police Force and Unia, so that the reports can also be included verbally in the figures without the need for official reports.
- 10.4.4. Unia leads the four-way consultations with the local police, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the city. This involves a data exchange and a plan of action to ensure that the policies and actions of the various partners are well coordinated and reinforce each other.